

REMARKS

Claims 1-22 are pending in this application.

Claims 1, 14, and 18 have been amended without the addition of any new matter (see full specification for support including FIGs. 1, pages 1, 6-7, 33-34). Claims 2, 4-13, 15, 17, and 19-22 have been allowed.

Claims 1, 3, 14, 16, and 18 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being unpatentable over Hirabayashi et al. ("Hirabayashi") (U.S. Patent No. 5,680,225). Applicant respectfully traverses these rejections, and requests allowance thereof in the pending application for the following reasons.

Substance of Examiner Interview

Applicant acknowledges with appreciation the courtesy extended to Applicant's representative by the Examiner during the interview conducted on May 6, 2004.

Applicant's representative and Examiner discussed the allowability of claims 1, 3, 14, 16, and 18 in view of the cited prior art, Hirabayashi. The examiner maintained the rejection of the last office action mailed April 1, 2004 for these claims based on the view that the enlarged image disclosed in Hirabayashi may be considered the initial (original) image recited in these claims.

In response to the maintained rejection, representative contended that the enlarging step disclosed in the prior art is

integral to Hirabayashi and therefore cannot be discounted and is significantly distinct from the recited features of these claims. In response to this contention, Examiner agreed to more closely review this distinction when an amendment is subsequently submitted that further clarifies this distinctive feature.

The Claims are Patentable Over the Cited References

Claims 1, 3, 14, 16, and 18 are not anticipated by Hirabayashi

Claims 1, 3, 14, 16, and 18 stand rejected under § 102(b) in view of Hirabayashi. Applicant strongly contend that Hirabayashi fails to disclose the features recited in these claims as amended such as an image conversion method in which image data represented by a required number of pixels is obtained from original image data represented by a predetermined number of pixels, comprising the steps of carrying out a first, initial image conversion, without previously enlarging which controls the original image data to said predetermined number of pixels, by obtaining, by a first interpolation calculation, image data represented by a number of pixels which is one-half of the predetermined number of pixels, from the original image data represented by the predetermined number of pixels.

Hirabayashi fails to disclose the recited features. Hirabayashi solely discloses an image reduction system that firstly, initially performs an enlargement on an original image, and then

thereafter performs $\frac{1}{2}$ reduction processing which is in direct contrast to the recited feature of not previously enlarging which controls the original image data to said predetermined number of pixels. Specifically, Hirabayashi states that "...an original image is subjected to an enlargement processing by a micro-enlarging circuit...by first applying enlargement processing by the magnification varying means to an inputted image..." (see FIG. 2; Abstract; col. 2, lines 21-22).

Therefore, Hirabayashi performs an initial image conversion step of enlarging an input image in strong contrast to the recited feature of carrying out a first, initial image conversion, without previously enlarging which controls said image data to said predetermined number of pixels, by obtaining, by a first interpolation calculation, image data represented by a number of pixels which is one-half of the predetermined number of pixels, from the original image data represented by the predetermined number of pixels. Applicant strongly contends that an initial image conversion step of enlarging original image data as disclosed by Hirabayashi is significantly distinct from and cannot be said to be performing a first, initial image conversion step without previously enlarging which controls the original image data to a predetermined number of pixels as recited.

Further, as contended during the Interview, Applicant strongly emphasizes that the step of enlarging is an integral part

of the Hirabayashi invention cannot simply be discounted to conform the prior art to the recited features. As specifically stated by Hirabayashi, enlarging is necessary to enhance picture quality (see FIG. 7, col. 3, lines 47-49) and therefore cannot be eliminated from the prior art wherein this initial, enlarging step (e.g., magnification of greater than 1) disclosed by Hirabayashi is significantly distinct from an initial step of reducing the number of pixels by $\frac{1}{2}$ (magnification of less than 1) as recited.

Therefore, Hirabayashi fails to disclose carrying out a first, initial image conversion, without previously enlarging which controls said original image data to said predetermined number of pixels, by obtaining, by a first interpolation calculation, image data represented by a number of pixels which is one-half of the predetermined number of pixels, from the original image data represented by the predetermined number of pixels as recited making the claimed invention patentably distinct from the cited reference.

Conclusion

In view of the amendments and remarks submitted above, it is respectfully submitted that all of the remaining claims are allowable and a Notice of Allowance is earnestly solicited.

Should there be any outstanding matters that need to be resolved in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact Clint Gerdine (Reg. No. 41,035) at the telephone number of

Office Action dated April 1, 2004
Reply dated July 30, 2004

Appl. No. 09/397,920
Atty. Docket: 1982-0136P

the undersigned below, to conduct an interview in an effort to expedite prosecution in connection with the present application.

Pursuant to the provisions of 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.17 and 1.136(a), the Applicant respectfully petitions for a one (1) month extension of time for filing a response in connection with the present application and the required fee of \$110.00 is attached hereto.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 or 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

Respectfully submitted,

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